

## Columbus to Lose Millions for Police, Firefighters and Neighborhood Services Under Taft Cuts

**(Columbus)** Mayor Michael B. Coleman today spoke out against Statehouse proposals to cut the Local Government Fund to every city, county, township and village in Ohio, a move that will tear millions of dollars from budgets that pay for public safety forces and essential neighborhood services.

**“Every day we hear more bad ideas from the Statehouse, and while they preach the rhetoric of jobs and efficiency, they are strip-mining local communities to pay for their decade of failed policy,” said Mayor Michael B. Coleman. “The same people who have controlled the Statehouse for 15 years have busted the budget and they are passing the buck to small towns, cities and our citizens.”**

The Local Government Fund was frozen in 2002, and in 2005, the City of Columbus will receive an estimated \$49.8 million. LGF is the second largest revenue stream to fund neighborhood services, and a 20% cut will equal at least \$10 million a year, or the potential loss of 112 Police Officers or Firefighters, or laying off 200 non-uniform City employees. While the City's spending rose only 1% from 2001 to 2004, State spending from 2000 to 2004 skyrocketed 25% and new State taxes were imposed at historic levels on Ohio families to balance the last State budget. The State is also proposing increases to fees that will cost the City of Columbus millions more, including a huge increase in fees for dumping trash.

**“There is a contract of trust between tax-payers, their hometowns and the State of Ohio, where local tax dollars are collected by the State and re-invested in local neighborhood services, the State is breaking its contract once again,” said Coleman. “They have failed to improve the economy and can't balance the budget, and now towns and cities will again have to make the sacrifices. In the end, it is Ohio's families who will face higher costs and a potentially lower quality of life. While the State continues to talk about Homeland Security and economic development, they are cutting Police and Fire protection and taking away the tools cities use to attract jobs and businesses.”**

For more details on LGF, see Page 7 of Executive Budget Briefing Book, available on-line at:

[http://www.obm.ohio.gov/budget/executive/0607/bb0607\\_brief.pdf](http://www.obm.ohio.gov/budget/executive/0607/bb0607_brief.pdf)

For an interesting look at what cuts mean to Columbus or other parts of Ohio, check out the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission's website at:

<http://www.mvrpc.org/lgf/index.php?colD=25&jurisID=816&reduce=0.25&show=Go>

This MVRPC website's calculator shows what it would take to fix the budget hole forced on Columbus by the Governor's proposal. For example, to replace a 25% cut to LGF, Columbus would have to create more than **29,000 new jobs** paying \$20,000 a year.

The State's proposed cuts would also seriously affect Franklin County's library system, which receives \$45.1 million in support a year, or 57% of their total operating budgets. The only way for local libraries to replace these funds is by raising local Property taxes.

**“Every time this Statehouse monopoly talks about tax relief, you can be assured that their plan will drive up local taxes on everything you buy, own or live in,” concluded Coleman. “They are passing the buck down to citizens who can afford it least, to bear the burden of their record deficits and failure to create jobs.”**